

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my distinguished colleague, Senator SMITH, in honoring our Nation's veterans through passage of S. Res. 365. We are days away from honoring veterans for their sacrifices with a national day of recognition on November 11. Our resolution would urge the President to order a proclamation calling upon employers to make special efforts to recruit and hire veterans this Veterans Day.

As chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am well acquainted with the employment issues facing veterans, members of the Guard and Reserves, and their families as they seek to move from the military to the civilian workforce. Making these transitions is never easy, but for younger veterans it can be particularly difficult. For members of the National Guard and Reserves, the return to a job they previously held may be challenging for a variety of reasons. For family members, the uncertainty of multiple and extended deployments poses different obstacles. Finally, the obstacles facing those who are disabled during their service can sometimes seem overwhelming. The needs of these individuals deserve our utmost attention and resources.

Despite these problems and challenges, veterans make good employees. They know how to work, and they bring with them a wealth of expertise and experience. I believe the employment data supports my belief since rates of unemployment for veterans generally are lower than their non-veteran counterparts. However, the rate of unemployment for younger veterans and those recently separated from active duty tends to be higher than their non-veteran peers.

This resolution would highlight the actions that employers can take to honor the sacrifices of our Nation's veterans and allow them to use the skills learned while in service to their country. Veterans have made sacrifices serving our Nation. When they come back from that service, it is our responsibility as legislators to aid them in returning to the civilian world. Having a job can be one of the greatest steps a returning servicemember can make in successfully reintegrating into civilian society.

I am honored to stand with my colleague in honoring the veterans of the Nation, and I urge my colleagues to join us. It would be my hope that employers around the country take up this proclamation as a best practice and continue to look at veterans as their first choice when making hiring decisions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 373) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 373

Whereas the people of the United States have sincere appreciation and respect for the individuals who serve in the Armed Forces;

Whereas in order to recognize their sacrifices, including time out from their civilian careers while serving in the Armed Forces, Congress enacted the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 to restore veterans to a more favorable competitive position for Federal Government employment;

Whereas, although veterans acquire skills and qualities during their military service that make them ideal candidates for employment, some veterans need assistance in readjusting to civilian life, including some young veterans who experience high unemployment rates;

Whereas it is acknowledged that the dignity, pride, and satisfaction of a civilian job are essential to the smooth and full reintegration into civilian life of those who have answered our Nation's call to arms; and

Whereas all citizens and all employers benefit from the service of members of the Armed Forces and thus bear some responsibility to assist in the reintegration of former servicemembers into civilian life: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) urges all employers, private sector as well as State, county, and local government, to target veterans for recruitment and to afford qualified veterans hiring preference similar to the benefits provided by chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, to preference eligibles, as defined in section 2108 of such title; and

SUPPORTING DESIGNATION OF A NATIONAL VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT WEEK

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 374, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 374) expressing support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our Nation in times of war and conflict.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 374) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 374

Whereas the Veterans History Project was established by a unanimous vote of the

United States Congress to collect and preserve the wartime stories of American veterans;

Whereas Congress charged the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to undertake the Veterans History Project and to engage the public in the creation of a collection of oral histories that would be a lasting tribute to individual veterans and an abundant resource for scholars;

Whereas there are 17,000,000 wartime veterans in America whose stories can educate people of all ages about important moments and events in the history of the United States and the world and provide instructive narratives that illuminate the meanings of "service", "sacrifice", "citizenship", and "democracy";

Whereas the Veterans History Project relies on a corps of volunteer interviewers, partner organizations, and an array of civic minded institutions nationwide who interview veterans according to the guidelines it provides;

Whereas increasing public participation in the Veterans History Project will increase the number of oral histories that can be collected and preserved and increase the number of veterans it so honors; and

Whereas "National Veterans Awareness Week" commendably preceded this resolution in the years 2005 and 2006: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes "National Veterans Awareness Week";

(2) supports the designation of a "National Veterans History Project Week";

(3) calls on the people of the United States to interview at least one veteran in their families or communities according to guidelines provided by the Veterans History Project; and

(4) encourages local, State, and national organizations along with Federal, State, city and county governmental institutions to participate in support of the effort to document, preserve, and honor the service of American wartime veterans.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Veterans' Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 289 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 289) expressing the sense of the Senate that a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" should be established.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 289) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows: